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SUNNY

Fall 1993





*In Memory of
Gabriel Brahm
NECC English professor and poet
1934–1993*

Parnassus

Inter-Arts Magazine
of
Northern Essex Community College
Haverhill, Massachusetts 01830

Fall 1993

Parnassus is the name of the mythological mountain home
of the nine muses who inspired humankind in the arts.

The policy of the editorial staff has been to select material for the magazine
democratically. We have read each work submitted and viewed all artwork. We voted to determine
eligibility: a majority vote for a piece meant publication. *Parnassus*
provides an opportunity for new artists and writers to reach others; it's a showcase
of Northern Essex Community College student creativity.

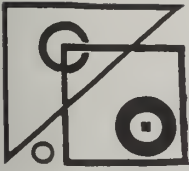


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Victor Coelho



De Colores!

Quietly
Autumn's Army musters
In Indian Summer profusions
Of Gold arrayed
Among the Bronze,
Lemon Yellows,
Apricot-Beiges,
Burgundys,
And Reds
Spray-canned
And
Brush-stroked
Across streets,
Deep meadows,
Scrubwoods
And
Ghettos
Of My Homeland.

Oh, God!
I love your colors so...
And, too,
In paint-canned
Classroom Souls and Faces
Who, in common questing seek
Truth
Knowledge
Pursuit of Dreams
Makes my young heart leap!
For in my melding
Within that Autumn Army
I Live!
I am made whole!

Dick Tibák

Three poems by Lydia Biersteker

Lycra Lady

Encased in leggings
shiny black
she runs each morning
'round the track
with plastic coated
weights in hand
and brightly braided
terry band.
Her legs so long
like lithesome stems
unscathed by fudge
or M & M's.
She moves so fast
she almost flies
this woman with
enviable thighs.

Wind

Did you ever watch
a summer's breeze
ripple through
the green leafed trees
or watch a potted
pansy dance
its beauty by
the wind enhanced
or see a baby's
sweet surprise
when nature blows
into his eyes?

How Nice, The Best Things Stay The Same

Wrapped in afghan
blue and tattered
I watch the night,
My thoughts are scattered.

Like the leaves
that crumple 'cross
my patio,
I feel the loss
of summer's end
and wonder why
these changes come;
and with a sigh
I draw my afghan
closely 'round
my shoulders, making
not a sound.

The night air starts
to clear my head
and I begin
to think of bed
and he who holds me
while I sleep.
And though my pensive
thoughts are deep
I think I hear
him call my name.

How nice, the best things
stay the same!



Christy Doucette



Chun Yo Kim

Behind Glass Eyes

Life is a journey.
A journey of the soul.
A journey of the mind,
Only you can foretell
What's in your future
And what to leave behind.
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A trance of pain,
A trance of lies,
A child behind glass eyes.
Looking on what could be,
Longing to be free,
Free from her misery.
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A trance of pain,
A trance of lies,
A child behind glass eyes.
With so many questions unanswered,
So many thoughts untold,
When will they be heard?
When will they unfold?
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A trance of pain,
A trance of lies,
Of a forgotten past.
Why feel so much hurt;
For it will not last?
Block out all memories,
The feelings are gone too.
The protective walls seize,
Someone who is true.
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A trance of pain,
A trance of lies,
A child behind glass eyes.

She sees what's right.
She knows what's wrong.
But there's that FRIGHT,
For she may not belong.
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A trance of pain,
A trance of lies,
A child behind glass eyes.
Will she make it through?
Will she be alone?
She often feels blue,
For she is to embark the unknown.
I can see in your eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A glimmer of light,
A spark of hope,
A child in sight!
Will she be able to cope?
A new strength found,
A meaning in life,
Now the thoughts are on the rebound,
Let them not be taken in strife.
A child in her sight,
Now she sees the light!
With more power and determination,
Let out the aggravation,
From here it's contemplation!
I can see in her eyes,
They seem to hypnotize,
A spark of light,
A glimmer of hope,
For now she may cope!!

Jennifer Quimby

Two poems by Janis J. Merrill

Deeper

Roots so deep of human need
Dug by fears on which they feed
Driven hard to earthly things
With burden's weight and turmoil's sting

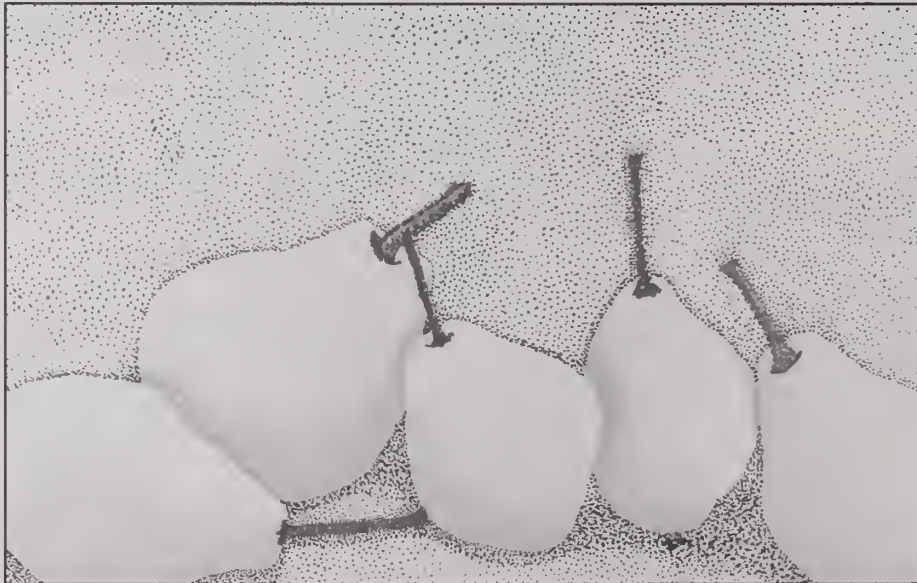
To mind and body, soul they cling

Alone I cannot shake them off
My greatest hope lies in the cross
Where Grace far deeper than my needs
Invites me, "Come, and be relieved

Dwell where the living water flows
Clear as crystal from the throne
It's here where I have eased your soul
It's here where you have been made whole."

Roses, Two Fourteen

Velvet petals peel away
Patiently pulled by warm winter air
Dying to expose the secret center
So fragile even a deep breath brings harm
Watered by tears of thawing pain
They follow me from room to room
A beautiful and desperate message to myself



Lisa Sears

Clipped Wings

All alone the little bird with
nowhere to fly to.

Your flock has all gone to
a better place.

Left you here to squeak and
squawk against the
silence that closes in around
you.

Nobody hears you little bird
Who's going to feed you
and shield you from the wind?

And yet you cry and beat
your wings in vain.

You fight the silence

For as long as you hear
yourself there is hope.

Julie Kittredge

Winter Trees

Divested of glories,
Still sentinels
Amidst white snow,
Hear the mute sound
Of winter white glow.

Lucia Valenti Nagy



Terry Shedd



Barbara Gariepy

Out to Sea

I walk beside the thunder, I listen to
its roar
I know it will not harm me, it casts at me
no swords

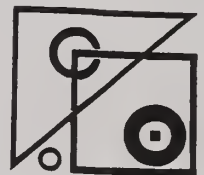
I chose a path beside it, to challenge my
own fear
For hate has settled in my heart and I don't
want it there

I listen for an answer to take away my pain
And soon my heart begins to ease yet no words
have been exchanged

Like the grains of earth beneath my feet the
thunder smooths my soul
The rage and fear within my heart begins to
toss and roll

With each new swell a freedom for which I can't
explain
It has drawn the storm within me and I am free
again

Donna Kelley



A Child's Broken Promise

I promised to make you smile
when tears ran down your cheeks,
but I handed you a tissue.

I promised you a hot meal
when your stomach growled,
but I gave you a sandwich.

I promised we would jump in the leaves
when they fell to the ground,
but I handed you a rake.

I'm sorry I broke my promise.
It wasn't in writing
it was in your eyes.

Victoria Gray

A Change of Adult

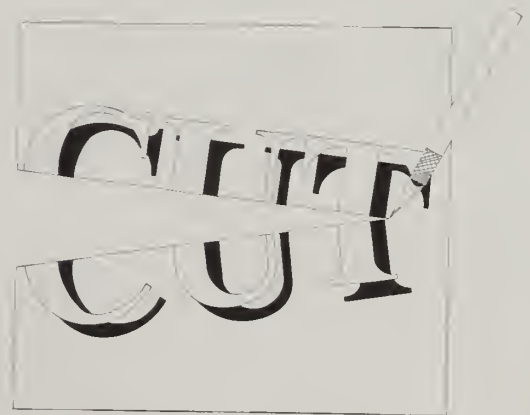
Pain, hurt, feelings...
Under, over, around...
Anyway but through...

Joy, healing, loving...
Within, without, all about...
The first stages — too many,
The second too few.

Trying, crying, changing...
Decisions, choices, successes...
Relationships, friendships, partnerships,
All steps of life — all new.

Talk, trust, feel...
Sharing, caring, growing...
I came, I listened, I grew.

Michelle Ann Downer



Eva McAvooy

Richard Lafontaine

Things of Things and More

Inceptive void, a place once bred
Unconscious form about to wed
Instinctual thoughts of finding one
To be the life that had begun.

Liquid sounds of place whence known
Confirms awareness of being grown
To time of Things of Things and More
Awakens the Spirit for what's in store.

Electric sight, more sensory frail
Assures the Darkness in blurred detail
Readies the Mind that It may see
And comprehend, what is to be.

Clashing symbol, beating drum
Muffled heartbeat the will succumb
To a Human's breast, a soothing sound
Contents thy Being with love abound.

Stay close O Warm in cherished sleep
Dispel the sob, no more to weep
For a gentle cradle, a touch of calm
Removes all fear and held from harm.

Perfect flower with skin of silk
Clean and pure, by Mother's milk
A nurtured form of life in Spring
Crowns the Glory, O Child of Things

Garble sounds of words to be
Of ABC's and 1 2 3
Noised, from bubbles burst each pitch
In rhythm to each body's twitch.

Fear not my Child the Human Word
You'll be given a talking bird
To make you laugh when you would cry
And help you learn so you'll get by.

Know to me and no to you
Hear what you can and cannot do
In this place of Beauty's Pain
Be quick O Child, they're not the same.

Crawl around before you stand
Feel your life within your hand
Touch the morning's color bright
Taste the smell of sweet goodnight.

Up and down and inside out
Kinetic Things that move about
In a place that's filled with wondrous awe
Are mimicked by what the Child saw.

Tell me Child of what you know
Of what you've seen and how you've grown
For I've been not in time well spent
With you, in need, my love repent.

So many Things to do and say
So many Things get in the way
Of making time fulfill its vow
To help you grow and show you how.

What is this Thing of Things and More?
What is the mood unlike before?
When being here was just a game
To run and laugh and tease Life's fame?

Speak you doubt O Child of Things
 That I may find some peace to bring
 To sure your pain that you would tell
 And be aware you're alive and...well?

Who are these beings so near to me?
 What are they doing, what do they see?
 What do they know and do not tell?
 I don't feel very well.

What is this place of smells unknown?
 What is this Thing of Things unshown?
 Why has night become the day?
 What does it mean "to be born with AIDS?"

No matter the fear this place once bred
 A moment passed, the Child lay dead
 Unto the Thing of Things was gone
 The Life from which, the Child was born.

Although we know, unlearned are we
 To face the Thing of Things we see
 The Things we say, the Things we do
 To a Child of Things that we once knew.

The days unnumbered, we carry on
 In weary flight from a perilous song
 A tune from which we try to flee
 The Dying Child in You and Me.

O Thing of Things give up your wrath
 Allow this Life to form and pass
 Your wicked scourge and pain and doubt
 That each Child will be born without.

Victor Coelho



Mui Van

A Little Bit of Me

It is three fifteen and I watch contentedly out the dining room window, beyond the many varieties of healthy green plants that sit on its sill and hang from the ceiling to catch the rays of the sun as it shines through the panes of glass, for the big yellow school bus to bring my sunshine safely home to me.

Sure enough it pulls to a noisy stop in front of the drive to our house and opens its doors that are stenciled with a black number four. I laugh as I watch her make her way down from the coal toned rubber padded steps of that bus to the sun baked tar of the road's edge. How funny her appearance is. This little girl who had gone to school looking picture perfect, now looking as though she had been through the ringer just one too many times.

Her clothes now painted with mud and grass stains and the autumn leaf blonde hair that had begun the morning in a pony tail, hangs wildly about her rounded little face. Reminding me of a comical scarecrow I had once seen in a children's book of literature, as she skips and hops along toward the thick metal framed gate of the chain link fence that borders the front yard. Once through, she stops briefly to say hello to the family dogs and give them a comforting pat on their heads.

I wait for the sound of the front door to swing open and bang against the living room closet and hear the thuds and thumps of her pink and white Barbie lunch bag hitting the wood stained floor.

I can remember how she begged me for it at the beginning of the school year so she could carry her school snacks and asthma (Proventile) medication in it. My heart aches for her every time she has to use it. To help comfort her better while she's having an attack I try

to imagine what it is like when her small lungs have to struggle for a breath of oxygen.

With a hurried excitement and a smile that would warm the globe she makes her entrance into the dining room where I now sit to greet her and share our homework time. I am able to get a better view of her now, and I cannot help but marvel at her beauty. Her cheeks brushed by nature with a soft rose blush, complimented by a small handful of amber freckles that adorns her button nose. Her flesh a fine cream and the lashes and brows of her eyes spun from the same gold threads of her hair.

Strong and vibrant is my sunshine, with her bubbly personality and warm giving heart of kindness that thinks of others before itself.

She walks along a path all of her own. So unlike the other two candles of my life is she. Hayley is free and Jon is wild. But not Charla. No, Charla is timid and often doesn't dare try to open her wings and fly even if for a short distance. Charla is my precious rabbit who tends to hide in her familiar walls of her securities. How much she reminds me of myself when I was a child her age, and I am only just now beginning to take my first flight.

I think back to when I first held her so long ago, and I cannot but wonder what the future holds for her. This little lady who often tells me of her plans to become, as she would put it, "a great children's teacher and, of course, a mother with a handsome, rich (or maybe not) husband. Just as long as he's good to her and the kids."

Have I been teaching her right from wrong and have I been giving her the values and tools that she will need to grow and become that fine young woman that she wishes to be? I can only hope and pray that I can give her the love and

patience that she has given to me the eight years we have grown together.

She makes her way to where I sit and tenderly wraps her arms around my neck, places a kiss on my cheek and puts an "I love you," on the wind to find its way to my heart. Then in a concerned tone of voice and in a

motherly manner, my sunshine asks me how my day has been. I turn and look down into her kaleidoscope eyes of blues, greys and greens and I say, "Things were a little blue, but they're getting better now just by your being here and bringing a little sunshine into my day."

Marjorie Poore

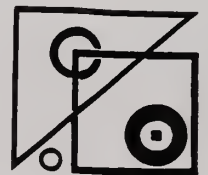




Andy Chulyk

a lock of silver fell down her face
her careworn eyes, the light embraced
reflected life, and years living
her heart it seemed, was always giving
she gave her soul, to those she loved
the children laughed, they pushed and shoved
in playful games, secrets told
on Autumn days, and bitter cold
she laughed, she smiled, and sometimes wept
memories lost, some she kept
her one true love, had found his fate
now she sits, now she waits
years had passed, since children played
on the old rope swing, which hangs half frayed
time had come, one summer day
her one true love, took her away
a lock of silver fell down her face
her eyes now closed, in love's embrace

John J. Greer



Two poems by Rob Infinger

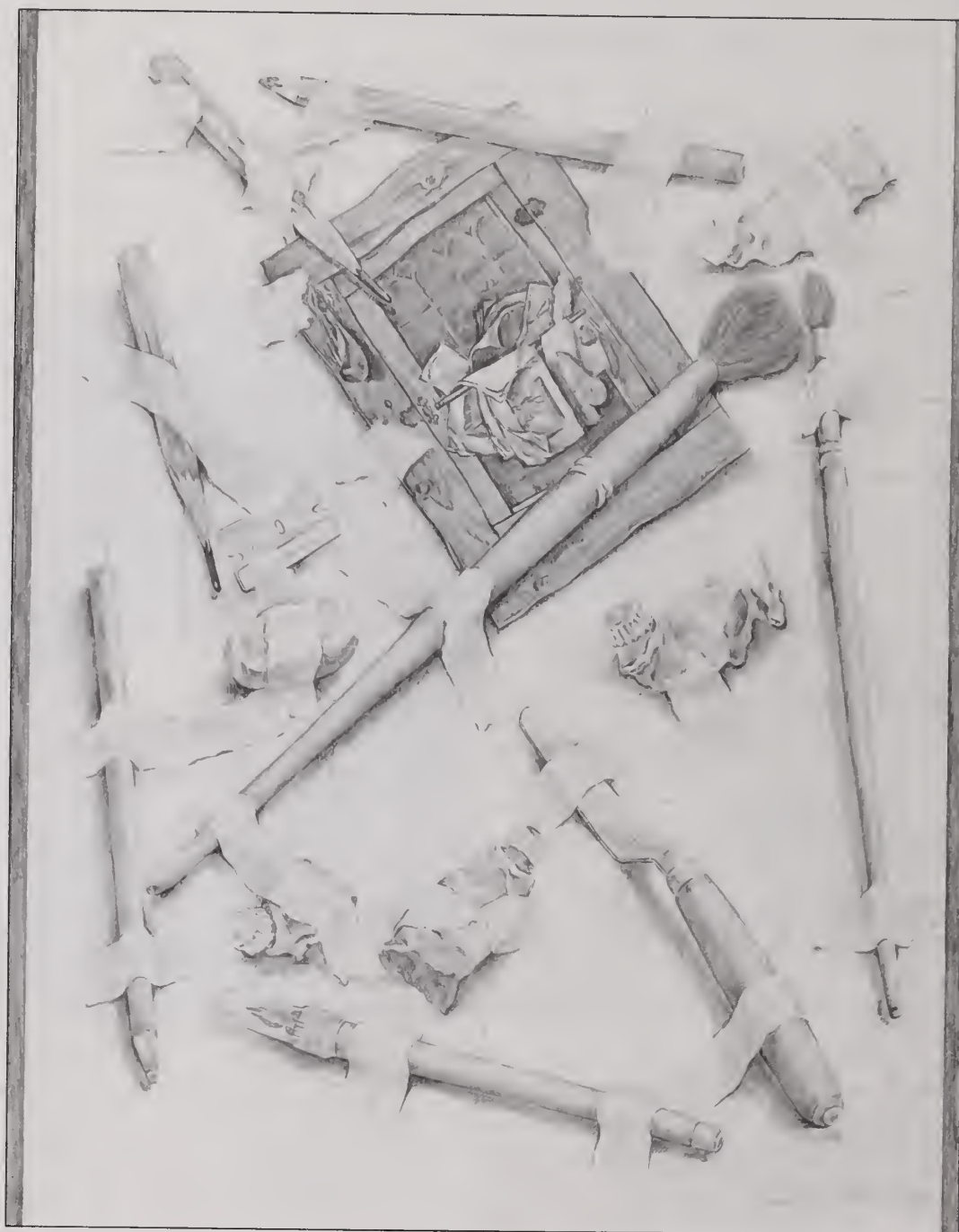
Harvest

Spring: joy of loves blossom had exceeded our desires.
Together in hand, we'd set to build our fires.
Thought a gentle breeze would fan the flame
But the rain, what of the rain?
Summer: Waiting. Hoping. A captive to mother nature.
Heat and hail, the elements tempt us to hate her.
Yet, daily, we rose to seek new strength and wisdom, a
harvest of strengthened love to fade our thoughts of doom.
Autumn: Back bent, sweat falls from my face.
North wind cools my body, hastens my pace.
The sun is falling without a sound,
Our hurried fingers keep searching through the ground.
Through these seasons we've worked within our fields,
So to rise and to find a harvest; a fire within our hearth.



first sight

Beauty draws a bee
Color is not its wanting
Pollen is its need

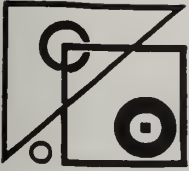


Chun Yo Kim





Armando Diaz



The Rose Has No Petals

The rose has no petals, the sun does not shine
The earth does not move and the clock tells no time
The stars have no sparkle, the rainbow no gold
The candlelight no fire, the whole world is cold

The autumn has no leaves, the winter no snow
The springtime no rain, so the flowers can't grow
The beach has no sand and the oceans are dry
All that is left are the teardrops I cry

Ever since you went away

For my heart has been wounded and my lips do not speak
My soul tries to be strong, but my spirit is weak
And my mind is confused, there's only one thing for sure
This whole world is not the same anymore

Now the birds do not fly and the angels don't sing
And there is no shine in my diamond ring
The skies are all dark, and the moon doesn't glow
All that is left are the teardrops that flow

Ever since you went away

Ronnie Doe

The End

I was reading the obituary notices in the local paper and the name of the deceased sounded familiar. The picture accompanying the notice looked like someone I once knew. Older but familiar, I took out my well worn High School yearbook and found that another one of my classmates had bit the dust. Literally and figuratively. And it was at this point that I began to ponder my own demise. Nothing makes a person more aware of his own mortality as when he learns someone of his or her own age has passed on.

Now it is too late for me to die young, and for that I am thankful. But I am not at a ripe old age either. And I feel young in mind, spirit and enthusiasm. Even if I was to live to be 105, that would still be too young for me to leave the world behind. And what would be said about me?

For some reason our newspaper chooses to add some bit of personal information about the departed at the top of the obit notice. One person was an avid golfer, another left 15 children. (It's amazing she lived to the age she did!) But the one that really got to me was the one that said the deceased "liked to make soup." This was written in bold print under her name. Now if my domestic abilities are what is going to live after me, forget it, I'm not going! What could they say? "I microwaved chicken sandwiches, and I boiled water for herbal tea." Not an impressive legacy.

What great accomplishments can be written about me? The fact that I learned to swim about 10 years ago in the Cedardale pool and proceeded to join their 50 mile swimming club will undoubtedly interest no one. But it sure meant a lot to me. Doing it a quarter mile at a time and shading in all those little squares on

the card. It took me four years, but I did it. I remember when I completed the last 1/4 mile. I was all alone in the pool. There wasn't one person around that I could tell what I had just accomplished. I wanted clowns and balloons and cheers of congratulations, but my achievement went unnoticed without any fanfare.

Flying to Seattle when I had a fear of flying...was that important enough for all to know? I doubt it. But my daughter had moved there and I knew I had to get on that plane. Since then I eagerly anticipate every trip I make and am listed as a frequent flyer with several airlines. But who cares about that information also?

I became a medical secretary and went to work for an otolaryngologist. Not only could I pronounce that specialty, but I could also spell it correctly. I could have gone the easy route and worked for an urologist, but I like challenge. I was even able to spell ecchymosis and myringotomy without looking up those words in the medical dictionary. But how impressive would this information be in an obit notice?

Many years ago my husband and I went to visit a friend whose mother had been buried several hours before our visit. Her death had been very sudden and unexpected, and I expected the family to be shrouded in disconsolation. However, when we walked in we were told to be quiet because her father was watching his favorite television show and she didn't want to disturb him. I thought it would have been nice if the deceased had been missed for ten minutes!

So I am being selfish. I would like to think that when I am gone there will be a void in my loved one's lives. That my children and grandchildren will miss me and wish that I was still

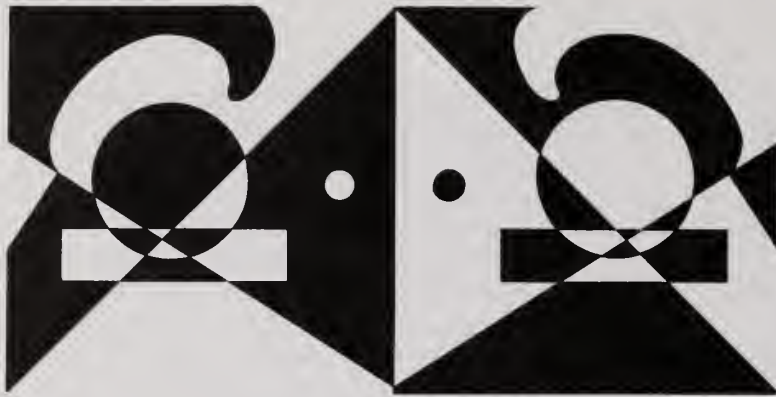
children will miss me and wish that I was still with them. Geographically my family has scattered. I don't see them often at all. I don't "reach out and touch someone." I give them all a good whack as we talk for long periods of time very often. And my grandchildren have

made me feel immortal. That somehow I will live on through them.

I hope I will enjoy my life up to the last breath that I take. I feel I will have accomplished this if my obituary notice reads: "Death was instantaneous. Her bungee rope broke."

Phyllis White





Deborah Crovo



Barbara Gariepy



Lori Amico

Wishful Thinking

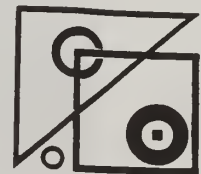
"So, don't you care what kind of grades you get?" She kind of laid there on the sofa looking at him, not really prostrate, just sort of slouched. "Well, don't you care what kind of grades you get?" He held the question up to the light, considering it, admiring its many responses.

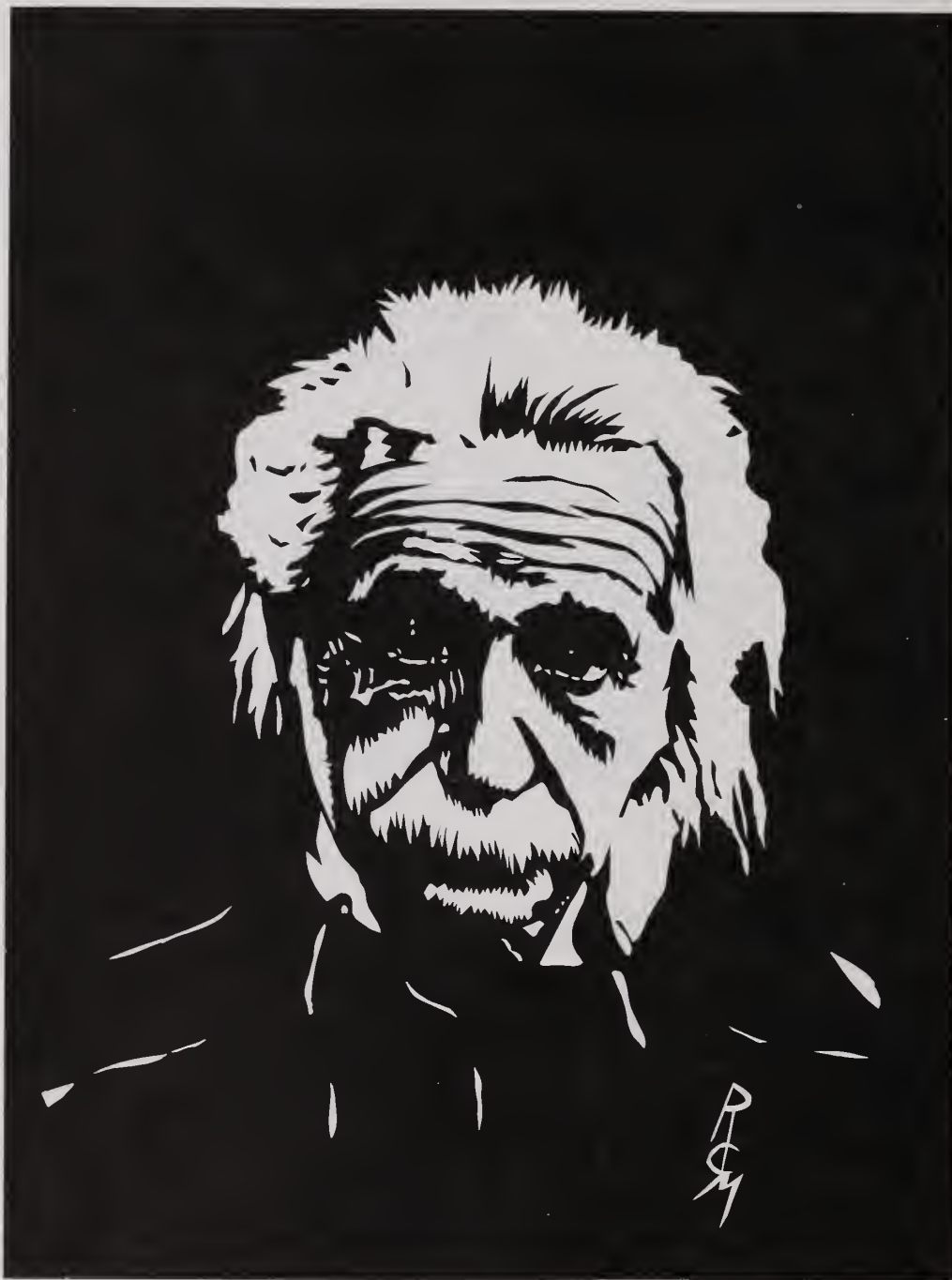
"I care about who I am and how I am. I care about finding someone compatible to walk through life with. I want to live in a big house, not a new one, but a big, old house with lots of nooks and crannies, a scary cellar and an attic...a scary cellar and attic with a happy home smooshed in between. And I want to have a yard, a big yard with a garden with those stupid little ceramic statues people put in them and pink flamingos or maybe one of those wooden women that's bending over showing her butt. And I want to have kids, not necessarily a lot of kids, but..kids. And pets. And I want to learn how to play an instrument, any instrument, and play it well. And I don't want to have to do anything all day and still make a lot of money...well...maybe cook and eat and watch movies or play my instrument. And I want there to be sunshine and snow and rain...yeah, rain for the garden and snow and sunshine for the kids. And I want to go places. I want to see the Pacific coast in California and I want to see the forests in Washington and I want to go to Texas and oh, oh, oh, oh! You know what I want to do? I want to go to the Grand Canyon. I want to go to the Grand Canyon to one of those cliffs you always see in pictures, and I'll take off my shoes and I'll let my toes grip the very edge of that very sharp cliff...and I'll look out into the canyon..and I'll take in a big, deep breath..and you know what I'll do? I'LL SCREAM! I'll yell at the top of my

lungs, I'll bellow out into the void, I'll scream and I'll get it all out once and for all, just get it all off my chest. And I want to go to other countries and see other places and meet other people...and I want to like them, and I want them to like me...and I want to have love and to hold love and to be loved and I don't ever want to have to pay taxes ever again, those silly damn things are a pain in my ass! And I want to laugh when it's funny and cry when it's sad and I want to dance, I want to dance like those people on T.V. You ever see them? They make it look so easy all fluid and natural and sensual like that..how do they do that? And I want to have all the answers...No...No...I don't want to know anything. I don't want to know jack shit...just keep me out of it! And I want to be able to go to bed at night and close my eyes and know that when I wake up tomorrow it's going to be another golden day and I will wake up...you want to know why? 'Cause I don't ever want to die! And I want...I wanna...I wan..."

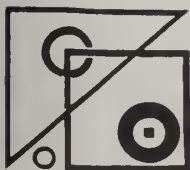
He slumped down onto the couch next to her, frustrated,...exhausted. It was hard to tell if she knew what he thought, how he felt, she was so good at not giving it away like that. He looked at her for the first time. It was hard to tell. "I don't know, Momma. I guess like with everything else in life I'll just have to deal with what I get."

G. C. Grenier





Rosemary Carter Molnar



The Deadline

sitting in the special chair
seems like hours
blank brain
no focus
warming up
thinking, pondering, writing
scratching my head
crossing out
getting pissed
crumpling
tossing
two more points
blank page
time for tea
have a snack
call Stephanie
clean the bathroom
vacuum, shine and dust
back to the chair
it's a must!
more pressure
no ideas
deadline knocking
on the door
scribbling, doodling
crossing out
up tight
no relief in sight
crumpling
slam-dunking
two more points

Joyce Nicoll

Eight Dollars and Eleven Cents

There was no time to waste. Christmas was too close to be indecisive about what to buy and how much to spend on each person. There was too much going on. The last minute sales on every item you needed had been sold out just before you arrived at the store. The time put aside to spend with family and friends just didn't seem to be enough. People to get from the airport and still more decisions of who was to sleep where when everyone was finally secure at home. Ah yes, still one more gift for someone who somehow didn't make your Christmas List, but was sitting in the den when you got home. Aunt Who? The food, the parties, the bills, all had a resounding reminder of the promise we made ourselves last Christmas of not going through this again. There we were, fighting the traffic and crowds, forgetting half of what we set to do and revising list after Christmas list.

We arrived home to a desperately needed haven of peace and quiet. In the front foyer, the ten foot Colorado Blue Spruce once lighted, dispelled all our anxieties and rejuvenated our Christmas spirit with its cool twinkling lights and festive decorations. The Tree was likened to that of a welcomed guest who brought a smile of joy to each one of us. Its Christmas Presence reassured all this would be the best Christmas. The Tree never failed. We put on a pot of coffee and began unpacking the treasures we had found. We knew without a doubt they would bring delight and surprise even to Scrooge's face. We anticipated what joy and happiness each little gift would bring its recipient and best of all, the toys. In our family, it has always been a tradition to carefully inspect and test all the toys before being hidden under colorful paper and ribbon. After all, we would

think, Santa wouldn't want any child hurt by a toy. The house began to fill with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee when I heard someone remark we were out of milk. I volunteered to risk life and limb and make one more trip to the store with the hope of having my faith in mankind renewed by returning home in one piece.

The traffic was still brutal. Horns were honking everywhere sounding like a jingle-bell rhythm. Red and green traffic lights seemed to change faster as though twinkling to keep motorists in the Christmas spirit rather than losing their patience in the bumper to bumper mayhem. The parking lot at the market was full and cars were parked everywhere they weren't suppose to be causing the traffic to move in a kind of obstacle course, their headlights and taillights streaming around in a neon garland effect against the snow.

I made my way to the market mumbling to myself, "All this for a gallon of milk?" I ran into some friends who told me they had been standing in the checkout lines for forty-five minutes and were about to call it quits and go home. I wished them a Happy Holiday and headed for the express checkout line. I knew this would be the easy part having only one item to purchase. How wrong I was! The five "eight items or less" checkout counters had lines going half way around the store. I wandered around in a confused daze when I heard a voice ask me if the milk was my only purchase and if so, I could go before him. Thanking him with a smile, I wished him a Merry Christmas and took my gifted place. In front of me was a single lady old enough to pass for Mrs. Claus. She was quiet as she intently watched the cashier ring up her food order. There was an expres-



Elena Floudaras

sion of happiness in her face as she smiled when she caught me looking at her. I nodded and returned the smile and thought how radiant she was. Her silver-white hair was pulled back from her brow into a bun and crowned with a small red and green bow. Her cheeks were rosy red as if kissed by Jack Frost in appreciation of her beauty. Her eyes were pale blue and sparkled through the little round spectacles perched on her nose. There were slight wrinkles in her soft skin which commanded respect deserving a senior. A high collar of ruffles came up to her chin and a small cameo secured a bib of white lace and a pale green satin ribbon at her throat. She stood straight and tall emanating strength and trust. Surely, the sight of her was the epitome of the Mrs. Claus in our grandmothers that we have been blessed to know.

The man who let me go before him and I struck up a conversation about the holiday. The small talk passed the time and removed some of the racket of the hustle and bustle in the store. Suddenly, an expression of concern came over his face, his holiday smile faded as though he had seen old Jacob Marley himself pass by. He nodded beyond where I stood to Mrs. Claus. I turned to find the grandmotherly figure in a sad state. She was fumbling through the items she had purchased, pulling one out here and one out there. Her hands were shaking, her purse fell to the floor and as I picked it up and handed it to her, I noticed tears began running down her cheeks. The cashier told her she was still short \$8.11 and to hurry it up as there were other people in the store. Mrs. Claus put her hands to her cheeks and apologized to the cashier for the inconvenience. The cashier persisted and became arrogant telling Mrs. Claus to hurry it up and decide which items from her food order she didn't want. The man behind me pushed forward and confronted the

cashier condemning her attitude. The cashier ignored him with total disgust, and he went back to his place in line grumbling something. Mrs. Claus pushed the tears from her face, her hands trembling, as she tried to find a tissue in her purse. The cashier started again telling Mrs. Claus to hurry up. I couldn't contain myself any longer. I intervened suggesting that the cashier call the manager to assist the lady. The cashier told me I should mind my own business. I explained to the cashier that we understood she was tired and that we all felt a little rushed and short tempered but this is Christmas. She seemed intent on having her way for now embarrassed at her own behavior, became angry. I instructed the bagboy to pack all of the items Mrs. Claus had purchased. I gave the cashier \$8.11 and looking at Mrs. Claus, I wished her a Merry Christmas. She raised her shaking hands to my face and gently pulled my head down to kiss me on the cheek. It seemed a deafening kiss for at the moment, all the noise in the store ceased. When I stood up and gained my composure, an applause broke out and people were cheering. The man in back of me leaned forward and wished me a Very Merry Christmas and returning the same, I thanked him again for allowing me to go before him in line. He held out his hand for a handshake saying, "Jacob's the name, see you around."

The cashier slammed the register drawer as I walked away with my gallon of milk. I thought to myself that on this night my faith in mankind had not been reaffirmed. I would not make it home in one piece after all this Christmas. My heart had been broken over the disregard for a person's feelings as being less valuable than a mere \$8.11.

Victor Coelho

Two poems by Todd Lamond



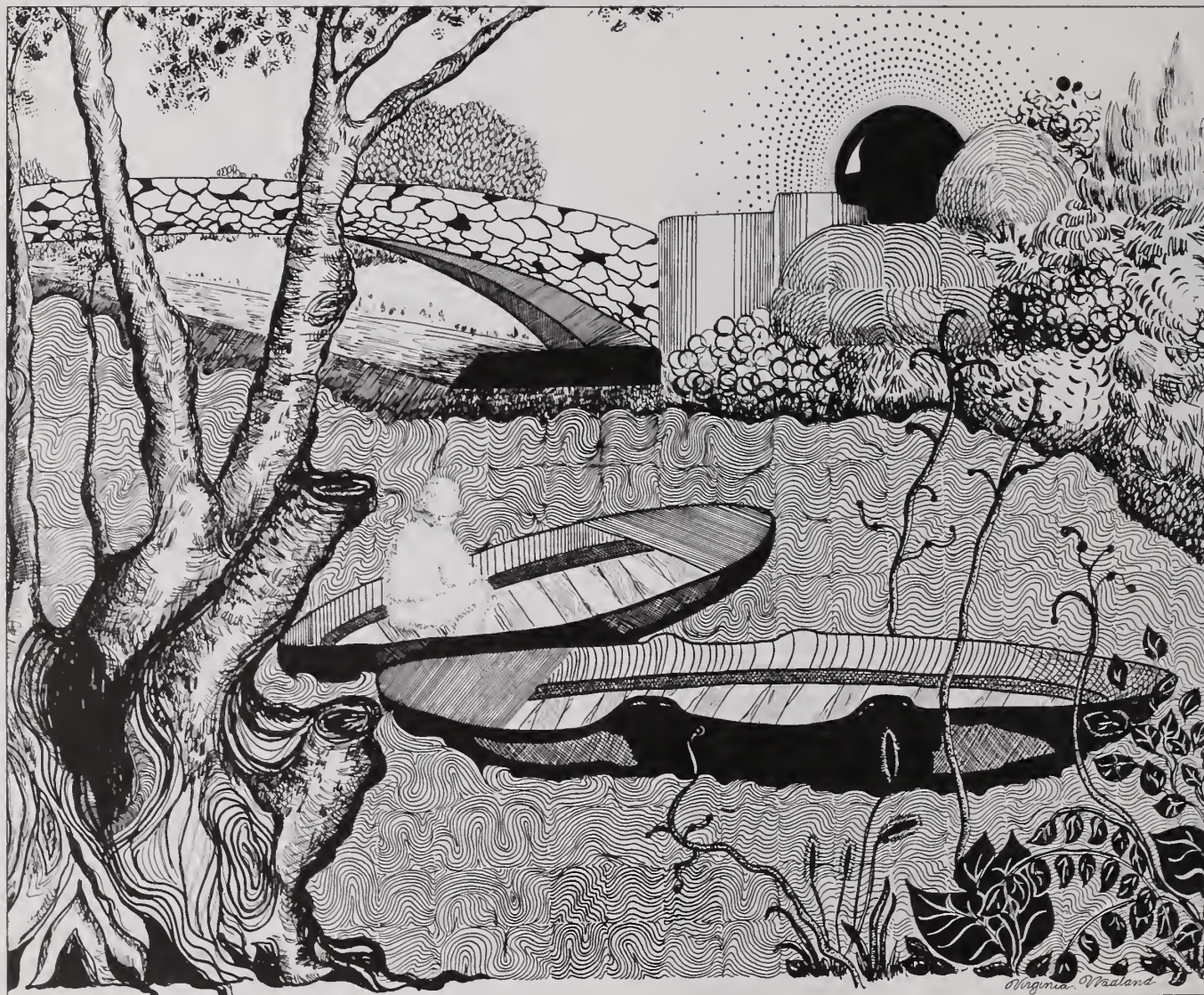
Todd Lamond

The Rain Storm

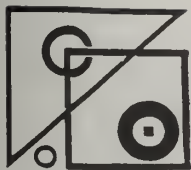
The waves so high
when the rain comes down.
The clouds so black
when the rain comes down.
The sky comes alive
when the rain comes down.
And soon after death comes around
when the rain comes down.

Spring

Icicles dripping
Snowmen melting
Sun shining
Grass growing
Flowers blooming
Birds singing
Rain pouring
Rainbows showing
LIFE.



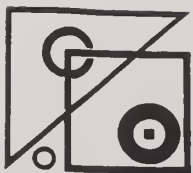
Virginia Wadland



The Fountains

Unearthly light of sun through leaves
A gold reflection on the lake
The silence (peaceful) of an abbey
Grass in solemn procession
Meets the mansion, deserted
Spiders in the boathouse
A white birch stands alone
Stark against the green
Now only ancient moss bubbles
Over cool and crumbling stones
Shrubs, encroaching, embrace the railing
Nearly heard, a gurgle
Through the terraced pools
Dry fountains run wet with mystery
In this sacred isolation.

Cybèle Dupuis



Aquella Mañana

Nunca creía que un día yo me enamorara, nunca
pensé en las cosas que vienen del alma. Solo
queria amoríos con horas contadas y si alguien
me queria poco me importaba, hasta que te
conocí al final de una fiesta. Casi de mañana
descubrí tu piel y las curvas de tu cuerpo.

Estribillo:

Aquella mañana de amor sin medidas me diste tu
vida, yo te dí la mía, se sació mi cuerpo, sobraron
los besos; no sé como decirte que yo me enamoré,
me enamoré. Yo solo quería aquella mañana
saciar me las ganas, beber de tu cuerpo, pero tu
recuerdo lo llevo en mi mente y hoy quiero
confesarte que yo me enamoré, me enamoré.

Nunca creía que un día yo me enamorara, nunca
pensé en las cosas que vienen del alma, hasta que
llegaste tú y cambiaste mi vida. Casi de mañana
descubrí tu piel y las curvas de tu cuerpo.

Johnny Rosario



Donna Griswold



Ann Albert

The Rabbit and the Turtle

I think that every culture in the world is different. Every country has its own culture. The people worship the gods or animals that they believe in. They see the power, the patience or wisdom of animals. So a long time ago the people didn't have a system of communication. They usually told other people about animals. By this way they taught us many valuable lessons and preserved their animal stories.

When I was a child, my grandmother usually told me some stories. Now I want to tell you an animal story from Viet Nam which almost all children in my country know. It's called "The Rabbit and the Turtle."

Once upon a time in a jungle all the animals lived together. There was a rabbit who lived there. He was very handsome with white fur, a long tail and red eyes. Nobody liked him because he always boasted about his abilities to others. He thought he was the most nimble and intelligent. He usually crooned, "I'm a white rabbit who is the most wise of all."

One day he went out and looked for food, jumping and singing. Then he met a turtle who was creeping slowly. I think, of course, you know what was going to happen because he couldn't control his behavior. So he laughed at the turtle and provoked him to run a race. He said, "Turtle, why are you creeping slowly? You have to run like me. I don't think that you can run a race with me."

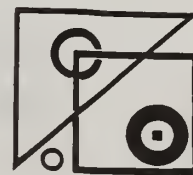
Turtle got angry but he spoke sweetly with Rabbit, "I know you are a very nimble and intelligent person, but I will try to accept your offer." Rabbit laughed, "Ha, ha, ha...you will lose and you will be insulted by me." He looked very happy. And then the race was started.

Rabbit ran very fast while turtle ran slowly,

but he did not become discouraged. He was patient with his abilities. Rabbit stopped on the way to pick flowers and forgot the race until turtle almost reached the place where the race ended. Then rabbit was very worried and ran at full speed, but he couldn't win. After this race he felt ashamed with himself in front of others and didn't boast any more.

Reading "The Rabbit and the Turtle" teaches us about patience. In life I think that we can succeed in any cause if we are patient. For example, when I just came here, I didn't speak any English. I had a lot of trouble to do anything. I thought that many people who had been here a long time, of course, were better than me. However, when they first came here, they were just like me. (I mean they also didn't speak English.) So I didn't become discouraged. My conscience always told me, "You have to try to be patient all the time. This attitude will succeed in the future. Don't forget "The Rabbit and the Turtle" story." Now I can speak English. I can understand everybody and they can understand me.

Yen Pham





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